

Township Of Leeds and the Thousand Islands

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes

Wednesday, September 21, 2011

TLTI EDC

Present: Wendy Merkley, Bruce Bryan, Linda Chadwick, George Horton, Jerry Huck, Vicki Leakey, Taco Meuter, William Odenbach

Gananoque EDC

Present: Mayor Erika Demchuk, Councillor Jan Hays, Shelley Hirstwood, Pam Staples, Dave Anderson, Jeff Brown, Erika Beresford-Kroeger

Regrets: Steve Hedderson

Staff: Rodney Burkard, Amanda Werner-Mackeler

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chair, Wendy Merkley.

2. Adoption of Agenda:

Special Joint Economic Development Committee Meeting Sept. 21st, 2011.

3. Mission, Achievements to Date, and County Update

a) Presentation of Mission and Objectives from Town of Gananoque and brief summary of accomplishments and current initiatives.

Shelley Hirstwood, Economic Development Manager for the Town of Gananoque explained the mission statement for their Economic Development Committee and expressed the importance of business industry retention, communication, education, and tourism. She explained how even the smallest business with one employee was important to help, as this business could grow to 2, then 4 and so on. Social media's importance was discussed as many individuals and families use social media to seek out entertainment and tourist opportunities.

b) Discussion on TLTI's EDC mission. A brief summary of accomplishments and current initiatives.

Vicki Leakey discussed the draft mission statement and mandate for TLTI and how the EDC is going to focus on a few tasks each year to ensure the completion of projects. Contacting the local Community Groups and asking

for their input as to how the EDC can assist their organizations is one of the current main tasks.

4. Round Table Discussion

The Committee members all introduced themselves and shared their reasons for joining their respective Economic Development Committee.

5. Open Discussion – Opportunities to Work Together

a) VIA Rail Station

Shelley Hirstwood discussed the Gananoque stop for VIA rail and suggested that the two municipalities work together to beautify the station in order to attract people to the area and to avoid negative publicity. Currently the station and could use improvements like cleaning the siding, planting flowers, new lights, brochure racks, maps, decorative panels on the windows, a sign on the road, etc. This may encourage people who are passing by on the train to stop in and explore the area. The costs will be approximately \$7,700.00 which would be shared between the municipalities, as VIA will not cover the cost for the upgrades.

The Committees agreed to work together on this project. A subcommittee made up of both Committees will be created and volunteers should notify Wendy or Shelley of their wish to participate.

b) Waterfront Access

Jeff Brown brought up the subject of creating more waterfront access for boaters and new launching areas. Gananoque is limited in waterfront properties, but there could be potential in TLTI. The St. Lawrence Parks Commission owns property along the St. Lawrence and this may be an opportunity to work together with them to develop such an area.

The Committees agreed to work together on this and a joint meeting will be proposed to the St. Lawrence Parks Commission. Wendy will notify the Town of Gananoque of the date and time for the meeting.

c) Purchase an Island

Jan Hays suggested that the two municipalities should work together to purchase an island where residents and visitor could have a 'St. Lawrence Experience' rather than just seeing the scenery as they pass by.

The Committees agreed that this was a great concept but are not in a position to undertake this project at this time.

d) Promoting our area to other Countries

George Horton suggested that the municipalities should work together to promote both municipalities on an International level. Recently, a tour for immigrants who are required as part of their immigration agreement to invest in Canada, traveled through the area. The municipalities could create a list to pair people in the municipality with immigrants or others who are looking to invest in area businesses. This idea could be further improved upon by ensuring the investors are made aware of the quality of life the area has to offer.

This idea was discussed and TLTI advised that the Committee is not yet in a position to agree to work together on this project.

e) Bike Path – 1000 Islands Parkway

There was a discussion concerning the bike path that is owned and maintained by the St. Lawrence Parks Commission (SLPC). Bicyclists may not be inclined to use the bike path due to its present condition and may seek out other cycling destinations.

The Committees agreed to work together on this and a joint meeting will be proposed to the St. Lawrence Parks Commission. Wendy will notify the Town of Gananoque of the date and time for the meeting.

f) Casino Walking Path

George Horton suggested that better access needs to be created from the Casino to the hotel area of Gananoque. This will keep pedestrians away from the main road as there is limited shoulder area.

The Committees agreed that this was not a high priority. In the future should this be addressed again, the Casino should be approached to assist with the project.

g) Business Mentoring Database

Shelley Hirstwood discussed creating a database of skilled retirees, trades people etc, who are willing to donate their time to assist residents who wish to learn a new skill/trade.

The Committees agreed that no action is to be taken yet, but this will be revisited.

h) Investment Opportunities

Shelley Hirstwood discussed the creation of an investment opportunities database where if either Municipality receives a call from someone looking to buy or lease a piece of land, then there would be a list of properties available from both Municipalities which would describe which amenities and opportunities are available and who to contact.

The Committee agreed to work together and TLTI asked that the Town of Gananoque create a general template to use.

i) Celebration of War of 1812

Vicki Leakey suggested that the Municipalities need to work together to ensure that activities don't fall on the same weekend so that there will be more of an opportunity for tourists to enjoy the festivities in both municipalities.

The Committees discussed how often they should meet, in which it has been left as undetermined. The next joint meeting will be with the St. Lawrence Parks Commission.

6. Adoption of Minutes:

Moved By: Vicki Leakey
Seconded By: Linda Chadwick

THAT the minutes of the EDC meeting dated August 17th, 2011 be adopted as presented.

Carried

7. Next Meeting date:

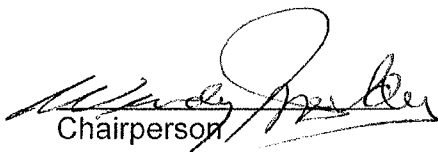
- October 19th, 2011 @ 5:15 p.m.

8. Adjournment

Moved by: Vicki Leakey
Seconded by: Linda Chadwick

THAT the EDC meeting adjourn at 8:00 p.m.

Carried


Chairperson